

#GLASS INTERVIEW

**Alexander Hayes
Dr. Ruth Mirams**

04 August, 2014



Preface

The following is an unplanned, private conversation occurred over a two day period by Google Hangouts chat between ourselves;

Dr. Ruth Mirams (au.linkedin.com/pub/ruth-mirams/61/45b/127/)

and

Alexander Hayes (au.linkedin.com/in/alexanderhayes)

We met each other on 12 May 2014, at an event called “Glass Meetup #1” hosted by the INSPIRE Centre at The University of Canberra, where Alexander is a Professional Associate.

This meeting was the first time Ruth had encountered Google Glass. Over the ensuing weeks, Alexander has advised Ruth (through her company Paramodic Pty Ltd - <http://www.paramodic.com/glass/>) on matters including the socio-ethical implications of digital Glass and other location enabled body worn technologies.

Despite being considered a private conversation at the time, we have together agreed to publish this conversation-turned-interview for contextual reference. We do so to highlight the difficulties that both researchers, colleagues and society faces as we consider how this technological innovation rolls out. At the point of publication, in Australasia, Google Glass is NOT a publicly accessible product nor is it yet been legally ratified for commercial dissemination i.e. via the Google Glass Explorer program.

Limited editing to this conversation occurred on the 04 August 2014 to ensure this document could be released as a registered publication. All editing retains integrity to original context and meaning.

More interviews with Google Glass Explorers can be viewed at <http://goo.gl/jtnVCQ>

Note annotation to interview text to denote authorship:

R = Ruth Mirams

A = Alexander Hayes

01 August 2014

(R: Sent photo - see above)

A: Get it off robot

R: I'll be wearing glass a bit next week

A: If you become a #glass wearer I walk

R: Even for a week?

A: I am serious - I won't cope but neither will I stop you.

R: I'm not becoming a glasshole Alex

But it doesn't hurt to do it for a week does it?

To understand them?

A: Not sure I know how I feel about it but it is for work purposes right?

R: Absolutely

But I want to know what you think

A: Will you wear them at home, in public?

Is there boundaries for Google Glass between private and public or indeed civic and communal?

Does a head worn computer change how you consider others?

R: Not at home

Only outside

A: Are there ethical considerations which are obfuscated by wearing Google Glass without knowing the engineering of Glass nor having the ability to own nor takeout your own data?

R: Interview me

A: Ok...*interview begins"

A: Does a head worn computer change how others consider you?

R: I want this to be an experiment
Let's design it

A: You are the experiment
The interviewer is Google

R: Can we be truly skeptical without at least understanding the attraction?
Can we examine the device without being seduced?

A: To understand the attraction you must become it.

R: Must?
Surely we can retain skepticism even in immersion without becoming?

A: To examine the device you must be seduced.

R: Must?
Must?

A: It is important you go on ahead Ruth.

R: Go on ahead?

A: I ensured that the public are seduced, enamoured, consumers

R: You did not Alex
At least not in my observation

A: My role now is to hold off for as long as possible and be the last person wearing them

R: How many people know what I know about the device, the data chain, data in general
and being practically skeptical before they put Glass on their head?
And then, more importantly take it off afterwards?
Any?

A: None.
They keep it on...especially people like yourself.

R: I don't want to keep that fucking thing on my head
I know how shiny things chip away at identity slowly and seductively
I am not interested in that

A: It is the next level. You must keep it on if you are to become what is next. First.

R: Become what?
What do you mean?
I want to understand the Explorers. I do not ever want to become one. And I want to talk
with you about this before I put it on my head and walk around
Please

A: We have talked about it enough.
Its time to become an Explorer.

R: Fuck off
I am not joining the legion
I am not under any circumstances becoming one of them

A: It is important that you do so that you can understand how to help them. To grow the
Australasian pro-sumer base.

R: Is that what you think of me Alex?
You hold me in that little regard?
Wow
Fuck you

A: It isn't a tool Ruth. It is smart device - the next smartphone as such.

R: I know

A: Then why are you getting upset at me???
I've been working on this for 5 years.

R:I know
PhD
Skepticism
Socio-ethics
Pro-sumers
Brand advocates
I know the story

A: I've watched hundreds of people become Explorers, interviewed the engineers behind the innovation
Shouldnt I be wearing it by now?

R: I don't know Alex
You tell me

A: I'm over the whole thing...its dumb, a stupid thing for humanity and the only project worth building is lore telling it what to do.

R: Then we agree

A: Thats why I have dropped anything else to do with it.

R: I know

A: I dont need to wear it to see the stupidity emergent.
Crazy position to take?

R: No
It's your position
I respect that completely
I did not say I would withdraw completely for you taking a particular position

A: Everyone EXPECTS me to wear it.

R: Nor did I question whether it was well thought through, or your agency to choose it
I don't expect you to wear it
Fuck you for telling me to wear it

A: Then you will respect my right not to be in proximity to it.
I was challenging you Ruth...not disrespecting you.

R: You completely disrespected me Alex

A: ???

R: "It is time to become an Explorer"
"It is the next level. You must keep it on if you are to become what is next. First."

A: By giving you legion language to digest? It is my greatest hope that you wont wear it at all.

R: "They keep it on...especially people like yourself."

A: Clever intelligent people have been drawn into the web and never returned.
I am sorry if it upset you.

R: You told me to put it on my head

A: I did not mean to upset you.

R: Is that what you want?
Is that what this whole thing is about?

A: No.
But you will be wearing it next week

R: Then why say it?

A: I dont know how to stop this Ruth...I am petrified in the role I have played.

R: Yes. We have it for a week to show some people. I am considering wearing it for a period of time. As an experiment Alex
Is there a problem with that?

A: I am deeply sorry for upsetting you.

R: You think I will lose myself into it in that time?
Do not be upset. It was a misunderstanding. I understand your position

A: I understand that my position is not understood nor important when it comes time understanding this innovation.

R: Omfg no

A: My perspective is worth very little.

R: UNTRUE!
Alex you've completely changed my perspective on this tech

A: It will be written up as a PhD and read by few.

R: Stop being so fatalistic
I wish to converse with you about this precisely BECAUSE of your position
I value it

More than anyone else's in this space
I trust your intellect
Your academic rigor

A: I am sorry Ruth but I will focus on the transcriptions and god willing the Ears on Glass app.

R: Your experimental capability
Focus?
So you're pulling out of our collaboration?
Fucking what?

A: No...the activity relating to development will happen.
The rigour is in the app.
I will always support your interrogation of Glass and wearable tech.
I am very sorry I upset you Ruth.

R: Talk to me please
Can we just take a breath and talk this whole thing through?
I do wish to speak to you about whether we can design a short experiment for next week
Or whether we are best not to

A: Yes...lets discuss that.

R: I will not lose myself to this device Alex
I am only just finding myself
Fuck Google if they think they can take that

A: I have hurt and offended you.

R: You have not

A: Your diction is at time perfunctory but mostly polite and convivial

R: My diction is perfunctory? In what way?
I do at times speak peculiarly

A:...until someone tells you what to do and then you become a firecracker with a lit short fuze. Peculiar...that's it.

R: I do not mind being told what to do. I do not like being told what to do when I know the real sentiment lies opposite to the expressed point of view
You baited me

And I bit the hook
It was what it was
No need to speak of it further

A: I....

R: You...?

A: You told me to not speak of it further so I stopped.

R: Lol

A: It upset me.

R: No need to, although we may....

A: It made me angry.

R: I bear no emotion to the situation
So if you wish to speak of it please feel free

A: Telling me you were going to wear glass made me angry.

R: Why?
Because I am just like everyone else then?

A: I express my anger in incredibly vicious ways.

R: It is not so vicious
It was you pushing me away
I know it well
And recognise the patterns

A: Partially yes...and that I know you are smarter than that.

R: It is not just about being smart

A: ...I am simply a sounding board.

R: Yes. I am undecided on my experiment yet

A: Whatever it is please realise you are in the middle of another one.

R: Of course!

Who will watch the watchers themselves Alex?

May I promise you something?

A: I am unlikely to have much to offer with your experiment but I hope you and Mik feel like I have connected you to the correct people to explore whatever direction you take

R: Of course you have

Alex I walk the skeptic's road

A: Please dont promise anything to do with glass then.

R: Wide is the gate, and broad is the way, many walk that way
I will not join them or I would already be there

A: Yes

R: Why did you get angry Alex?

A: ...because I am not making any headway.

R: With?

A: My life.

You are very busy and driven

R: As are you

A: Astounding...constantly amazed - yes you bit hard

I am kicking myself

Stupid

R: Not at all

These are grave matters Alex. Identity, reality, relatedness

Humanity

And we agree

Skeptical

Interrogative

Questioning

It is a beautiful outcome

A: Yes. I wanted you to think deeply...but I did it the wrong way.

R: I always do. I am a considered person Alex. I do not act on whims
I am not changeable or fickle

03 August 2014

A: Wearing glass for the week.
I dont need the corporation in our discussion

R: The corporation is already listening

A: But yes... I fear that a lot

R: Hangouts is owned by Google
You fear what?
Losing me to Glass?

A: Yes but the phone isnt on your head
Losing anyone to Glass

R: I'm not getting seduced by that thing Alex

A: Ok...lets change the subject - it is becoming increasingly difficult to know what to think or
which approach to take with those I care about in this respect - meeting a whole heap of
explorers has hardened my resolve to avoid being one at all cost

R: Can we resolve this first?
Where you go, I shall go

A: How?

R: Your people shall be my people
In this context, that means ethically I am with you
And I don't become an explorer til you do
Okay?

A: I will never be a Glass explorer
Nor will I ever wear one no matter what the circumstance
Nor am I religious
It is the same reason I stopped wearing and selling POV equipment across Australasia
5 years ago...
It almost destroyed me....my stance now is not even firm

It is resolute

What part of this do we need to resolve?

It is the line that I drew in the sand the very same night we met

R: What line? Why the night we met?

A: You do NOT need to wear Glass.

Full stop.

Your business and intellectual investment is in NOT wearing the device - your profit is in social capital of related humans not unconscious cyborgs

That was the line I drew with you and everyone.

R: Are there conscious cyborgs?

A: Transhumanists claim that existential networked connect hybrid humans are a good outcome for humanity as a whole.

R: I am inclined to disagree

But perhaps I am a Luddite

What do I know of humanity?

Little

A: Surely you know of <http://2045.com>

R: No

....Oh yes I do

Craig Venter

Interesting man

A: Ruth, the fact of the matter is that no matter what I say you are very interested and compelled to be interested in where this heading

Deeply inquisitive

R: Yes I am. And I will never be otherwise

A: Prepared to guinea pig in order to know more, be more...become the subject

R: To a degree, yes

A: It is inevitable that we would meet

R: Scientists often experiment on ourselves

But I'm human too Alex. I have ethics, conscience, consciousness

I'm not a cyborg wannabe
I cannot run from my humanity in technology
I know that is futile
Anyway, I do not wish to cause distress
Let us speak of other things

A: I must be developing OCD in this as it brings me great anxiety knowing of what is coming next...

R: What is coming?
Should I get the pitchforks and light the fires Alex? ;)

A: Yes...you should. If you sat with Steve Mann, Thad Starner, Amber Case, the Augmate crew...yes, you would either agree with them or not

R: I know why you are interested in Indigenous peoples
I have already publicly disagreed with Steve Mann

A: They claim we NEED to all wear a network connected device permanently. No questions.

R: Corporate digital colonisation of human consciousness and experience

A: Control. To control us. Why the fuck wouldnt I disagree with them. I need open access as a dangerous person to do my work. I need to not be locked up.
You said it succinctly.
Corporate digital colonisation of human consciousness and experience

R: Hence The Indigenous link
They know a little of surviving colonisation

A: You wont like my comment in G+

R: Lol
Not attributed I notice!

A: You and I are likely not to sort this out Ruth.

R: What is there to sort out?

A: Why dont you go ahead and attribute it...saying that you and I are locked in extensive discussions about this.

R: Because I don't care about attribution

A: That we will publish our 'interview'.

We will have published...and attributed. You do care about attribution. Deeply.

R: To what end?

A: Ruth, please hear my point of view.

R: I have

'Get it off, robot'

You know what TERRIFIES me about that?

A: Nothing at all Ruth.

R: You could not be more wrong

A: I have correctly attributed you and I in that comment I made.

R: I see that

I was kidding Alex

You may have all my words

A: What terrifies you Ruth.

R: A gift

A: I will delete it if you thought it was a joke.

R: I did not think it was a joke

The attribution part I was not serious about

But leave it as it is

They can know we speak of this

A: Thank you.

R: You may use that phrase without attribution wherever you wish, or with attribution. It is yours now

A gift

A: Got it, understood, you are busy and need to get on with it all.

R: Wtf?

Omfg Alex
Pushing me away will not work

A: I am ok with stepping aside Ruth when it comes to this discussion...

R: I am not

A: I need to complete my PhD...
It is not a popular perspective
It wont help Paramodic show the world how to tame Glass
I can advise but ultimately....it will be as it will be.
That is why I have pulled out of all Glass related projects...because if I dont I cant complete
nor resolve a position.
It has come at a great cost.

R: I know it has

A: It will fuck you over with how dedicated I am to this Ruth
I will upset you both and question you openly regarding this as it develops

R: Good! I want that!
Precisely that!

A: You are likely to hide things from me because it will be easier for Paramodic
It will be hardest for you when I go silent, ignore you and refuse to be near you wearing
glass

R: If that occurs, yes
May I tell you my position Alex?

A: Sure

R: Or will it upset you?

A: Of course it will but tell me anyway

R: Please may I ask you to not respond until I am finished?
Is that okay?

A: Ok

R: Thank you

11 weeks, 6 days, 3 hours and a handful of minutes ago, if you had asked me if I would wear Glass I would have unequivocally said yes
Enthusiastically
Eagerly
If you'd asked me if I wanted an implant
Same response
Technology makes my life easier
It connects me to people I love who are far away from me
It brings me interesting information and stimulates my brain
It's a *good* thing
I know the NSA collects information and there's some murmurings about privacy, but what to do I care?
Give me the shiny new things!
11 weeks, 6 days, 3 hours and handful of minutes later, my thoughts have changed
Now I believe that such technology is what I said
Corporate digital colonisation of human consciousness and experience
I fear the outcomes of precisely people like me putting it on their heads
People who are inquisitive and skeptical and principled
And yet do not turn this lens on technology
Perhaps because we already struggle to separate our physical selves from the digital world
In 11 weeks, 6 days, 3 hours and a handful of minutes my position has been altered. It will never return
I will never blindly accept technology ever again
You are the sole reason for the change
Your skepticism has awoken mine
And I am deeply grateful
You know the story of the man and the beach and the many starfish?
I feel like the starfish
11 weeks, 6 days, 3 hours and a handful of minutes later, I am still flying through the air
I hope you directed me towards the ocean
But no matter what, it's better than sitting on the beach slowly dying
With everyone else
You made a difference to this one
Thank you
Okay I'm done

A: <sent picture of Ruth in Glass from G+>

R: ?

Why did I do that?

It was off and out of battery

A: I know Ruth.

Think deeply on it all.

R: I am

A: You will gain everything by warning those who blindly would have done as you would have done.

R: I know!

That's the point isn't it?

To do just that?

A: Yes...I am imploring you to take every gut and instinctual feeling and turn that into a position.

R: What do you mean?

A: To NOT wear Glass but to work cleverly, closely with those that do

R: Precisely

Hence the point of that photo and where it went

A: They will all try and seduce you and I

R: Of course they will!

May I let you in on a secret Alex?

A: You need never wear it again to conduct any number of experiments.

Yes Ruth...please do.

R: I am a pretty, bubbly, clever blonde. People attempt to seduce me for any number of reasons, all the time.

I am good at resisting

I won't be seduced by shiny Google things

A: I already know this Ruth and it is not a secret to Google.

R: I know

They know all the secrets

What I'm afraid of

What motivates me

They will try all sorts of things

I know

Now I have words for what we are doing

Resisting colonisation

A: So what we do is we do things here that only Google is allowed to know

R: It does not often end well

A: I converse through other channels too Ruth
Channels that even Google doesn't go near

A: For good reason I'm sure

A: Yes.
I only want to work on one Glass project.
The backbone.

R: I know
Do these conversations disturb or upset you?
With me?

A: Profoundly but I must continue. If you are my confidant then we must transcribe together.

R: Why do they upset you?

A: We must also work in Paramodic to sew secrets into Glass...defuse it. Make it work for us.

R: The Lucy approach

A: This is a ten year old project for me Ruth. I have much invested in it.

R: I know
Please understand then why these conversations are vital for me
And how deeply I appreciate you having them despite the fact they upset you

A: Yes - I work closely with Lucy too

R: Lucy who?

A: http://www.researchgate.net/profile/Lucy_Resnyansky

R: Lol not that Lucy
I do not know her
I meant Lucy Leane. Dharug

A: <http://www.alexanderhayes.com/project-summary/>

I was speaking to DSTO in Feb.

R: I see that

A: Yes...both Lucy's are power (ful).

R: Alex have I clearly articulated why I need to speak with you about this? And why I need you to challenge me constantly about it?

A: Data sovereignty, colonisation of cultural norms, pattern creation.

Yes...but I am still very fearful of the fact that you are thinking of wearing Glass to teach others as to your knowledge and intelligence in any domain

R: Then I won't

No Glass this week

A: What can I do to persuade you that there is 100x more power in not wearing it - simply presenting it for consideration

R: No need to

It is done

A: You are a scientist - your role is not to take the LSD....it is to gain understandings as to the effects it has on those taking it

R: No Glass this week

A: Lets interview 50 UK Glass Explorers together

R: Sure

For this week I take the null hypothesis

A: Set of ten questions

R: When do we start?

A: For this week you do anything and everything but do NOT wear Glass

We start interviews tomorrow

And transcriptions in earnest

R: Okay

Let's do it

A: I introduce you as my confidants across a wide array of senior ethicists

R: For what purpose?

A: We get into serious discussions and you will never ever regret the decisions you are making

R: May I have the floor again?

A: To open your awareness to the knowledge you truly wanted in the first place
Shoot

R: I am so deeply thankful you take the time and emotional energy to engage in this discourse with me. It is very disconcerting to go through such an ethical awakening in such a short period

Exhausting and exhilarating

Deeply shaking

Difficult

Valuable

I *need* such discourse

I can always choose to put it on

Once that choice is made it cannot be reversed

The decision not to put it on can always be reversed

Therefore not wearing it is the null hypothesis, the scientific starting point

And where I should have begun and remained

Thank you for reminding me of that

And thereby allowing me to keep my scientific ethics and principles intact

I owe you deeply

And am grateful to my core

But please keep reminding me

And remember how quickly I have come to this ethical position

Be gentle with me, but help me protect myself from it and those who seek to control through it

Thank you

Okay I'm done

A: Now...have we started with the Glass discussion?

R: Fucking hell you and I bang on glass

Started, yes

A: You are so generous...

R: Finished, fuck no

R: How are you feeling Alex?

A: Exhausted

R: About our discussion?

A: Very very very very very

R: Good exhausted?

A: Happy
Relieved immensely....

R: You know everything I said is true

A: Beyond belief

R: I would not have any qualms about wearing it if it weren't for you
Thank you

A: I know Ruth.

R: I know it cost you to bang with me on it

A: I feel I will have "saved" one soul

R: Alex Christ

A: Deeply....I am weeping with relief.
No...not ChristI just feel that much about this.
Glass is not good for anyone.
You have literally made my year
I owe you incredibly...

R: You convinced me
Not at all!
You convinced me
You took a position

A: Yes...it is very important that is done

R: Argued from evidence
And you are convincing
You changed what I think
It is the way academe is supposed to be

A: Yes...my position is informed, evidenced direct, and the 50 interviews we conduct together in Hangouts of the UK explorers will be a further body of evidence
You must know this...so much so as to refuse to see you, to not be anywhere near you if you were to proceed as I saw you doing

R: I understand

A: It hurt me so deeply....but I knew you would understand

R: Of course

A: I actually shook my head physically last week, put my head in my hands and sobbed

R: I am so sorry to do that to you
I apologise deeply

A: I didnt tell you about it but when I saw you wearing glass I actually cried out your name loudly

R: Really?

A: In pain
Terrified

R: Of?

A: Kept conversing with you at the time as normally as possible
That you would not be a scientist about this particular technology
I knew I had a steep battle within myself to implore you

R: Which you won :)
Thank you!

A: I am relieved beyond belief it makes me cry now Ruth.
I will not budge - we need NOT wear this technology to know how to influence those that do and those that dont

R: I am convinced Alex
Not because you tell me
Because I believe
You have convinced me



